

To: Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis and the member of the Environment Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly,

As Chairman of the Connecticut Council (TUCC), I represent Trout Unlimited in Connecticut, overseeing the eight Chapters and our 4,000+ members here. TU is the nation's largest grassroots coldwater fisheries organization with a mission to conserve, protect and restore North America's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. We work to achieve this mission on a local, state and national level through an extensive volunteer network and dedicated staff.

TU has approximately 140,000 members organized into more than 400 local chapters. TU's members are anglers, community leaders, professionals, and business owners, and are among the most effective and articulate grassroots advocates for protecting our important watersheds and landscapes.

You have already seen testimony from Greg Sharp, Chairman of the Fisheries Advisory Council, of which TUCC is a member, supporting the proposed HB 6047. I won't repeat his rationale, but TUCC is in complete alignment with them. He is spot on with his statement concerning the true nature of the bill: "FAC supports a thorough examination of funding options for Connecticut's hatcheries and recreational fishing programs".

We agree that the current funds diversion practices are deceptive to the fishing and boating public, and create unnecessary turmoil within the DEEP's hatcheries each and every year. Finally it is disappointing that the value of TU's nationally acclaimed Trout in the Classroom program is questioned as well, given that the proposed state budget has provided no funding to keep the critical Kensington hatchery in operation to support TIC.

We definitely need this bill to move forward, have its proposed changes evaluated and improved in the legislative review process, and finally passed, to fix what has been broken for too many years. There are approximately 10,000 students in Connecticut, who oversee 110 aquariums in 70 towns with 90 schools, who are looking to your effective leadership to get this legislation signed. So are the 150,000 anglers in the State who have heretofore enjoyed some of the best outdoor recreation in the East. You have TUCC's ardent support on this.

Regards
James P. Glowienka

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Chairman, Connecticut Council
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